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March 4.

Mr. Thos. Meehan, Vice-President, in the chair.

Thirty-six persons present.

March 11.

The President, Dr. Ruschenberger, in the chair.

Forty persons present.

The following papers were presented for publication:—

"On the Nudibranchiate Gasteropod Mollusca of the North Pacific Ocean," by Dr. R. Bergh.

"On the Variability of Sphæria Quercuum, Schw.," by J. B. Ellis.

The death of Dr. J. H. McQuillen, a member, was announced.

Note on Opuntia prolifera, Eng.—Mr. Thomas Meehan exhibited specimens of proliferous fruit of this species, sent by Mr. Jackson Lewis, of San Jose, California. The fruit of three years ago were still fresh and green, and these produced other fruit immediately succeeding the last year. Mr. Meehan remarked that similar cases were on record in Masters' "Teratology," and in connection with this species in Brewer and Watson's "Flora of California." The latter authors state that the proliferous fruit are always sterile; but in cutting open twenty from those exhibited, one was found with a perfect seed.

Mr. Meehan pointed out the value of these abnormal growths in explaining structure and function. In the succulent Cactaceæ we speak of the small green bodies which appear and early mature on the young growth, as the "leaves;" but we know from morphological law that the whole fruit is formed of metamorphosed primordial leaves, and there is no reason why the whole body of the cactus might not be formed in the same way, and we should then, perhaps, have to regard the so-called "leaves" as mere appendages. At any rate, here is a case of what should have been fruit enduring but a few months, assuming a permanent stem-character, and performing all the functions usually connected with stem. It seemed scarcely to leave room for a doubt that not only the parts of the inflorescence, but the whole stem-structure is but "modified leaf," in text-book language.

Again a lesson is afforded in relation to the essential difference between growth and reproductive force. The one of course grew out of the other, and is in a great degree co-relative; and yet they are, in a great measure, antagonistic forces, and it is as useful to recognize them as such, as to note the distinction between leaf—blade and petiole, or liber cells and wood cells. Assuming the distinction between these two forces, we are able to express the true character of this abnormal formation. The reproductive force after influencing structure towards its especial object, had been again subjected by the growth, or, more properly, vegetative force, and it was thus enabled, though in an imperfect manner, to continue in the line of its especial function. Of course all of these distinctive powers in plants come down ultimately to varying phases of nutrition, and in this direction we are to look for the secret whereby nature is enabled to make up the innumerable forms and conditions of living things.

March 18.

The President, Dr. **Ruschenberger**, in the chair.

Twenty-nine persons present.

The deaths of the following members were announced: J. B. Knight, E. Spencer Miller, Clement Biddle, Henry J. Williams.

March 25.

The President, Dr. **Ruschenberger**, in the chair.

Seventy-three persons present.

A paper entitled "Notes on Amphiuma," by Dr. H. C. Chapman, was presented for publication.

Edw. D. Cope was elected to fill a vacancy in the Council, caused by the death of Dr. J. H. McQuillen.

Wm. L. Auchincloss and Joseph Mellors were elected members.

Wm. H. Leggett of New York, John M. Coulter of Hanover, Ind., and George Bentham, F.L.S., of London, were elected correspondents.

The following were ordered to be published:—